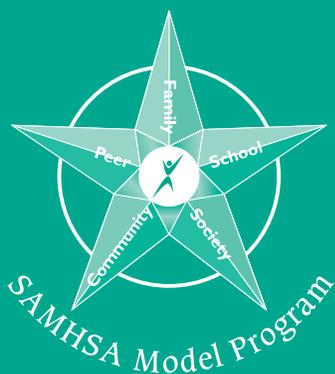




Class Action

PROVEN RESULTS

- 33% reduction in the usual increase in alcohol use and intentions to use alcohol in high school, through 12th grade
- 50% reduction in the usual increase in binge drinking during high school, through 12th grade
- 80% reduction in underage alcohol purchases from alcohol package sale outlets (i.e., liquor and convenience stores)



Class Action is part of the Project Northland school-based alcohol-use prevention curriculum series that significantly reduces increased alcohol use and binge drinking by high school students. A program for youth in grades 9 through 12, Class Action—

- Delays the onset of alcohol use
- Reduces use among youth who have already tried alcohol
- Limits the number of alcohol-related problems experienced by young drinkers

Based on the social influences theory of behavior change, the Class Action curriculum uses interactive, peer-led sessions to discuss and debate the consequences of substance abuse, thus changing the social norms around alcohol use and changing negative peer pressure into positive peer pressure. The Class Action intervention develops resistance, decisionmaking, social competence, and leadership skills. It can be used as part of the Project Northland series or as a stand-alone program. Results highlighted here, and reviewed by NREPP*, come from communities that were part of a Project Northland study.

INTENDED POPULATION

Original research, reviewed by NREPP*, primarily included White students and students from seven American Indian tribal reservations. However, the program is intended for use with African American, Asian American, and Hispanic/Latino youth as well.

HOW IT WORKS

The Class Action curriculum is delivered during 8 to 10 weekly classroom sessions. During the sessions, students are divided into six “legal” teams to prepare and present hypothetical civil law cases in which someone has been harmed as a result of underage drinking. Using a casebook, along with audiotaped affidavits and depositions, students build legal cases and present them to a jury of their peers. The six case topics include date rape; drinking and driving; drinking and vandalism; drinking and violence; fetal alcohol syndrome; and school alcohol policies.

Class Action encourages community involvement through the use of outside speakers within classroom sessions or for the entire school, student research on alcohol-use issues in their own community, and student involvement in community events (using ideas from Project Northland’s SuperCharged! materials). Parent education involves the distribution of four colorful postcards with key messages for parents about teen alcohol use and their role in preventing its use.



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Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
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OUTCOMES

The multicomponent community-wide approach, targeting high school students' access to alcohol and changing community norms, appears to have been effective in reducing the growth rate in alcohol use in the intervention communities. The trend data showed significantly less increase in alcohol use among students in the intervention communities, as measured by the Tendency to Use Alcohol Scale, binge drinking, and, marginally, past month alcohol use ($p < 0.07$).

The Tendency to Use Alcohol Scale incorporates intentions to use alcohol in the future as well as current levels of monthly and weekly use, providing a dynamic measure of alcohol use for this population. The reduction in binge drinking is particularly important: since underage youth have been shown to engage in more binge drinking than those of legal drinking age, it is clearly a problem for this younger age group.

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IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

Many schools or school districts coordinate delivery of the entire program from grade 6 through 12. This coordination is not mandatory, but highly recommended. Individual schools or teachers can also purchase Class Action and implement the program on their own.

Training

Class Action 1-day teacher training is highly recommended, but not mandatory. The teacher training curriculum package may be obtained from Hazelden Publishing and Educational Services at 1-800-328-9000, ext. 4030.

Materials

The curriculum package includes a teacher's manual with reproducible handouts in a 3-ring binder, 42 casebooks (7 each of 6 titles), a set of audiotapes or CDs, and 30 each of 4 parent postcards. All necessary teacher materials are included in the curriculum package; however, some student handouts will need to be photocopied. Class Action can be used with any number of students, but the optimal number is six groups of four to five students (24 to 30 students). No special space requirements are needed, other than the ability to have students meet in groups around tables or by moving desks together. An overhead projector and tape/CD player are the only equipment needed.

PROGRAM DEVELOPERS

Cheryl Perry, Ph.D., Carolyn Williams, Ph.D., and Sara Veblen-Mortenson, M.S.W., M.P.H., developed Class Action (Project Northland) at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, Division of Epidemiology.

* National Registry of Effective Programs and Practices

Program detail and citations can be obtained at <http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov>

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